

## BOOKS OF THE WEEK SEEN IN REVIEW AND COMMENT

CRITICAL REVIEWS  
OF LATEST BOOKS

The Stealing of King Philip's  
Lovely Spoil—Novels on  
Many Themes.

## THE WAR FROM ALL SIDES

Amelia Josephine Burr's story of "A Dealer in Empire" (Harper and Brothers) tells of Olivares, the ambitious Minister of King Philip IV. of Spain. The Spanish monarchy did not get on very brilliantly after the death of the second Philip. Its three kings of the seventeenth century were no very lofty figures, and Olivares, proud and terrible as he may have been and looked, did not greatly shake the earth.

Velasquez, the painter, is in this effectively told and spirited tale, and it is related how the artistic feeling seized him when he caught his first sight of Olivares. "Room! Room for his Excellency Olivares!" The gilded ministerial coach was coming along at a hot pace, flinging high and far the mud that Spanish respect for tradition would not permit to be removed from the streets of Madrid. Velasquez flattened himself against a wall, as the other pedestrians did, but this only saved his bones. "The young artist had received his full share of mud." Other spattered sufferers muttered their irritation as they imperfectly wiped away the copious offense. "But he stood in an ecstasy, his ardent southern eyes full of their vision of a face at the coach window—a face like a mask of pride carved in weathered marble. Holy Virgin! sighed the young man, what a man to paint!" He painted the terrible Minister afterward, and the famous portrait is reproduced here; the reader may judge whether if it had been his own fortune to obtain a sight of the great Olivares he would have trembled or smiled. For our part we have never seen a cloak like this, nor a hand laid like this upon a sword hilt without a twitch of those muscles which are employed in smiling.

The story tells how this ambitious Minister carried off to his own spoil the beautiful blond actress Soledad, who was desired by the King. Doubtless this audacious abduction had as much effect in toppling Olivares from his high place as had all the frequent and successful military attacks of foreign and domestic enemies. The proverbial truth is well illustrated in this tale, that enjoyable as it may be to look in the favor of princes, it is disastrous indeed when the princely sunshine changes to bolts of lightning. King Philip feeble though he was as the political head of a State, was terrible enough when he discovered what his Minister had done with the fair Soledad.

Let us not forget to say that El Hermoso here was a subtle and relentless dwarf, a tenacious hater. His part in the vengeance that overtook Olivares will produce gooseflesh upon the reader.

## SOME NEW FICTION.

The private life of an amiable writer is related by Peggy Webling in "Edgar Chirrup" (G. P. Putnam's Sons). Though the author employs a humorous tone throughout it is a rather melancholy tale she has to tell of disillusion on his part and of the persecution of the girl who loves him.

By the Author of "Big Tremaine."

MARY MORELAND  
By Marie Van Vorst

A dramatic story of New York's social and business life, in which a clever young woman of high ideals meets a great temptation. A novel big with appeal and no less absorbing than "Big Tremaine."

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FROM "THE WELL-CONSIDERED GARDEN" BY R.M. JOHNSTON

There are recollections of Dickens and the characters stand out well, especially the selfish, dissolute matinee idol whom he admires, the wretched creature whom he foolishly marries, the oily villainous dealer in antiques and some of the actors. The hero and the girl are attractive and it is rather barbarous for the author to keep them apart so long. The story will hold the reader's attention in spite of the theatrical flavor, and he will not begrudge the author her memories of Steerforth and David and Uri Heep.

Though he is a trifle too anxious to explain conditions and dwells overmuch on his fancy about the location of the lost tribes of Israel and his belief in the permanence of Alexander the Great's civilization, Col. G. P. McMunn has written an interesting tale of love and adventure in "A Freeland in Kashmir" (E. P. Dutton and Company). His hero is a half-breed who unites in himself the good qualities of the Scots and of the Afghans. He lives at the beginning of the nineteenth century where any great fortune could befall the brave adventurer who could keep alive. He manages to win an uncommonly lively and enterprising Afghan princess, and has to contend against unfair odds, for his chief opponent is the Wanderer.

The country girls who are taken in hand by the efficient settlement worker in "The Girls of the 'Just Girls'" (Fleming H. Revell Company) are lifelike and their development is natural, even if they are overawed by the omniscience and infallibility of modern uplift methods. The story is designed to demonstrate the workings of the Eight Weeks Club movement of the Young Women's Christian Association by which the women in rural communities are to be lifted out of the rut in which they move and made to work out their own independence. Incidentally many of women's grievances against man are exhibited, the hard work she does without remuneration, the privation of pocket money, the hindrance to her seeking work and so on. Likewise the temptations to which girls are subject. The need of a clear explanation probably accounts for the author's failure to suggest probable breakdowns in the system. The girls will interest the reader.

It is in the London school of action that Minnie J. Reynolds' "The Crayon Blue" (Mitchell Kennerley, New York) properly belongs, for the important part of the story tells of the flight of an energetic young school teacher against the corrupt and dissipated life of the city. The story is told in the first person, and before the Legislature, and perhaps logically into the advocacy of women's rights. Unluckily the desire to blacken her villain makes the author's arguments unconvincing. It makes him the associate of gangsters, who kidnap and torture women and break into houses; his misdeeds are so serious that the condemnation at the end is almost criminal. The melodrama weakens the plea for the schools.

The disastrous marriage of an indiscreet young foreign diplomat with a dull and unresourceful American girl is described by the Countess de Chambrun in "Pieces of the Game" (G. P. Putnam's Sons). He has a knack of talking to people when he should not and holding his tongue on vital subjects at home, which is decidedly provoking to the wife. The two have no chance, however, because they are pursued by an evil minded and vindictive woman whose venomous tongue is not to be trifled with. The story is filled with much conversation in official circles at Washington and elsewhere, which confuses a tale that is by no means of absorbing interest. Possibly it may contain portraits.

Various childhoods are described accessibly by Mrs. S. C. Peel in "The Barnet Robes" (John Lane Company), but with one exception they have no bearing on the story. This contrasts the careers of the two daughters of an amiable but singularly characterless man. One is illegitimate, but being brought up by a loving and capable mother is sensible, earns her own living and marries happily. The other is born in wedlock, is misunderstood by her unsympathetic mother and wholly neglected by her father, is thwarted in her artistic aspirations and comes to a miserable end. The author writes pleasantly but fails to explain the point of her story.

A libel on the intelligence of newspaper reporters by Thomas B. Senger is entitled "It Happened in Atlantic City" (Richard G. Badger, Boston) and may serve as a guide to their plans. The evidence kindly recite their plans in the hearing of the listener, who at once makes theatrical preparations to thwart them.

## WAR BOOKS.

A further instalment of articles designed to explain what war news has been allowed to get out is contained in "Frank H. Simonds' 'The Great War, Second Phase'" (Mitchell Kennerley, New York). It suffers even more than the author's first book from the remarkable achievement of the authorities on both sides in suppressing all information that could be serviceable, but to what has been permitted to be known Mr. Simonds has applied his keen intelligence and has



R.M. JOHNSTON  
AUTHOR OF  
"ARMS  
AND  
THE  
RACE"

A SPIRITED STORY IN  
BEHALF OF PROHIBITION

James Hay Jr.'s story of "The Man Who Forgot" (Doubleday, Page and Company) is related with much animation. It tells in a prologue how the door shook under the dull thump of a heavy impact as if a crack of meat had fallen against it. This was in a house of refuge in Ohio. The unfortunate young man who presently entered gave the dreadful impression of a spectre. He trembled. His coal black hair was tangled. His beard was a work of art. The eyes were terrible. They had in them the flame of terror. He could not remember his name, and accordingly was entered on the register as John Smith.

He held in his hand the glass of whiskey which was given to him and said: "I've come down from high, awful places, places so high that the pale ends of lightning whips cracked harmless against my eyeballs—so high that escaping souls went by me like thin white flames." Not noticing the entrance of a tall and gravely beautiful young woman who "wore in her black hair a red rose" and whose "opera cloak falling slightly away from her shoulders showed her

columnar neck," he spoke of a presence that he seemed to see in the whiskey. He said of this presence that its hands were unnaturally white and that on its shoes it had ashes of dead souls. "Look how he works, lashing the backs of men, breaking the hearts of women, stealing away the laughter of children. Look at him—all ghoulish eyes. His mouth's a grinning gap. And he's got ashes on his nice new shoes—ashes of dead souls." This unfortunate man whose memory had been lost through drink did not drink the glass of whiskey. He spilled it on the floor and collapsed in the arms of "old Sullivan," the kind hearted person in charge.

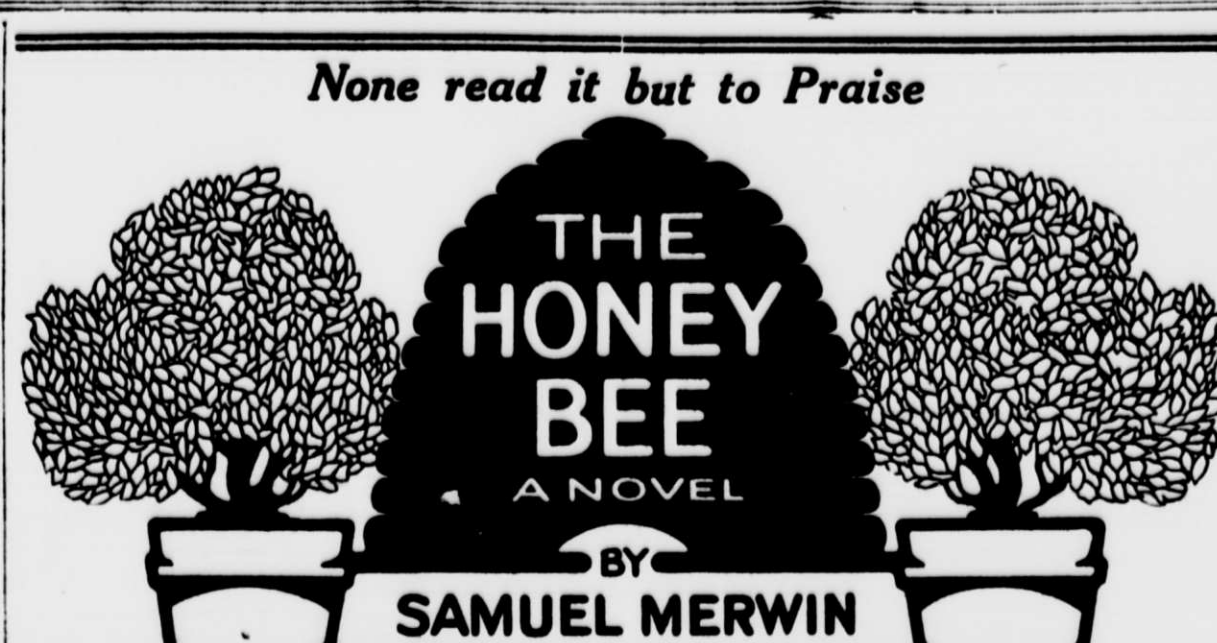
After an interval of five years we find John Smith in Washington directing the great battle for national prohibition. Senator Mallon is his chief opponent, a statesman controlled by the whiskey interests. "All right," he said, "you're not yet thinking about this fellow seriously!" Edith was the Senator's daughter. Also she was the young lady with the opera cloak and the columnar neck mentioned in the prologue. He said of this presence that its hands were unnaturally white and that on its shoes it had ashes of dead souls. "Look how he works, lashing the backs of men, breaking the hearts of women, stealing away the laughter of children. Look at him—all ghoulish eyes. His mouth's a grinning gap. And he's got ashes on his nice new shoes—ashes of dead souls." This unfortunate man whose memory had been lost through drink did not drink the glass of whiskey. He spilled it on the floor and collapsed in the arms of "old Sullivan," the kind hearted person in charge.

sought day by day to make the military operations comprehensible. In this volume he conducts the war from the fall of Antwerp in October to the second fight around Ypres at the end of April. Illustrating his text with clever maps, the book supplies the reader with an intelligible account of the fighting, so far as the information that has been allowed to come to us permits.

The accounts of the operations of the British army which the censorship has permitted the British press to publish, which are signed "An Eye-Witness Present with General Headquarters," are collected in "The Narrative of the War" (Longmans, Green and Company). They cover the period from September to the end of March, and serve as a record of what England was allowed to know in the first months of the war.

Another account of personal experiences, valuable because the author limits himself to telling what happened to him and to her eyes only, comes in "The Field Hospital and Flying Column" (G. P. Putnam's Sons). The author is an English Red Cross nurse sent to Belgium during the invasion. She was captured by the Germans, and released after a while; then sent to Russia, where she served ill she fell sick and found time to write this book.

The industrious editors of the "Fatherland" have gathered articles by Englishmen who have criticized the Government or branches of administration or who are disgruntled with the conduct of the war and present them, under the title "England on the



None read it but to Praise

THE HONEY BEE  
A NOVEL  
BY SAMUEL MERWIN

NEW YORK CHICAGO BOSTON PHILADELPHIA

The Honey Bee is richly suggestive of searching thought—within it is a most excellent, a most readable novel, admirably well constructed and well written. —N. Y. Tribune.

An interesting and significant tale, worth reading and worth thinking about afterward. Much bigger and more vital than any of its predecessors. —N. Y. Times.

If your bookseller can't keep it in stock, send \$1.35 to THE BOBBS-MERRILL CO., Publishers, Indianapolis, U.S.A.

Baroness Oracy became a novelist quite by accident, as is so often the case with novelists. Some of her friends had stories accepted by the magazines. "Look at those people," she said one day to her husband, "who have never been outside their own limited little circle. They write stories and are well paid for them. I have been all over Europe and have known many interesting people, why shouldn't I write stories, too?" Her first attempt at fiction was "The Scarlet Impeller," which she sent to the publishers. It was accepted, and she was captivated by the youthful author at the process of putting her thoughts to paper that she decided to abandon painting for all time.

Then followed "By the Gods Be Loved," "A Son of the People," "Beau Brummell" and others, and these more or less ran up. "The Scarlet Impeller" was a success, and she was captivated by the youthful author at the process of putting her thoughts to paper that she decided to abandon painting for all time.

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A Man of Strange Places.

The author of "Dodo," E. F. Benson, is both because of the intensely English setting of most of his novels and because of his scholarly and down-to-earth style. His latest novel, "A Man of Strange Places," is a story of a man who has been in India for many years and who is now in England. The story is told in a simple and direct manner, and is a very good example of Benson's style.

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## SCHOOL TEXT BOOKS.

An excellent idea is carried out effectively by Paul V. Bacon in "Vocabulary of Latin and Greek Words," which is a conversational method for beginners in German. German literature is described in the simplest of language, helped out by many photographs of the objects and scenes the text tells about. The result is that a vocabulary of common and necessary words is acquired, which will be as useful to travelers in Germany as it is to children. Interspersed are simple German poems and at the end are German songs, which seem somewhat militant just now. Following the more conventional grammatical lines, but school boards and colleges require it, is the "Deutsche fuer Anfänger" by W. D. Zinnecker, Ph. D. (D. C. Heath and Company, Boston). In which the author tries to combine the conversational method with grammatical instruction. He has had the sense to relegate the German written alphabet to the appendix.

For the study of English we have an interesting collection of "Selected Letters" by Stella Stewart Riegan.

Putnam's  
New Publications June 11

Edgar Chirrup  
by Peggy Webling  
12". \$1.35.

"At any rate from first to last there is not a page in this book that is not sweet, wholesome, and entirely readable. Here is tenderness without mawkishness, humor without noise, a sufficiency of action without harshness of outline; most surprising, here is a story in which many of the characters are of the stage, presented with an entire absence of limelight or any other vulgarities. All this, indeed, one expects from the title; but none the less it is no mean achievement. And so—my congratulations." —London Punch.

Pieces of  
the Game

by Countess de Chambrun

The Countess de Chambrun, formerly Miss Clara Longworth, here gives us a frank and realistic story of social and diplomatic life in Washington. A story of intrigue and mystery whose characters, though they be purely fictitious, move not as puppets of the imagination but as live people of the very "inner circle."

Field Hospital  
and Flying  
Column

by Violetta Thurstan

The Journal of an English Nursing Sister in Belgium and Russia, including hospital work at Charleroi, Brussels, and Warsaw, and experiences at the bombardment of Lodz, and by the trenches at Red Bank.

—Times, London.

All Booksellers—All Prices Net.

New York G. P. Putnam's Sons London

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